

1 ARGENTINA / BRAZIL

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## FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : Amconsulate, Porto Alegre, Brazil 18  
DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

August 13, 1952  
DATE

REF : Consulate's Unclassified Despatches Nos. 101, dated February 8, 1952 and 155, dated June 13, 1952.

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SUBJECT: Argentine-Brazilian border incidents.

The Consulate submits a summary of press opinion and press coverage of the continuing violations of Brazilian territorial boundaries by Argentine Federal Police. The space allotted to these incidents by some papers assumes the proportions of an all-out campaign for official action, especially the Chateaubriand paper DIARIO DE NOTICIAS, which has consistently and volubly urged that diplomatic measures be taken.

Noting the volume of protest in the entire Brazilian press, DIARIO DE NOTICIAS reports repercussions in the Federal Legislature, as well as the "dangerously aroused" border populations.

In commenting on the detailed report on these incidents made by Rio Grande do Sul Secretary of the Interior Michaelson to the Governor of the State, the paper calls it a "condensation of the entire situation". In this report the Secretary suggested the policing of the border by the Brigada Militar (State Militia); he termed the action of the Argentine Federal Police the "periodic and sadistic hunting down of some Brazilian citizen".

Considerable indignation is expressed by this paper at the Argentine note which attributed these "brutal crimes" of the gendarmes to their "vigilance in pursuing smugglers"-- which, it was noted, is in direct disagreement with Secretary Michaelson's report. DIARIO terms Perón's release of the note to the press before submitting it to Brazil's Ambassador in Buenos Aires a "flagrant and unpardonable breach of ethics".

Noting the substitutions in the command of the border guards less than 24 hours after the conference between Ambassador Luzardo and Argentine Interior Minister Borlenghi, DIARIO DE NOTICIAS reports Perón's praise of these officers for their "important and patriotic services to the nation". It was noted that the Argentine Gendarmería (Federal Police) is more powerful than the Army and Navy and has Perón's complete confidence. Also reported is Minister Borlenghi's

statements concerning

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statements concerning Argentina's losses through smuggling, and the killing of 21 gendarmes during the past four years without Argentine reprisal.

A night session of the Brazilian Congress is reported in which a Federal Committee of Inquiry was designated and given ample powers to investigate Rio Grande do Sul border violations.

Also reported is another machine-gunning; another murder of a Brazilian, including the deposition of an eye-witness, as well as documentary evidence of Argentine maltreatment of Brazilian citizens and other statements as to the sadism of Argentine border police.

It was noted that in accordance with Secretary Michaelson's recommendations a detachment of Brigada Militar soldiers was sent to the border at Santa Rosa. It was pointed out that the Committee of Inquiry would confine its activities to Brazilian territory, adding, however, that if necessary it might proceed to Buenos Aires. In Rio, it was reported that the Foreign Minister has stressed to the President the necessity for immediate action based on the conclusions of the Committee.

On July 13 it was reported that orders from the State Police in Porto Alegre brought about the action of Uruguiana police in preventing the meeting of protest against the Argentine border incursions. The reason given for this action by State Police was that the Communists had distributed a bulletin asking to participate in the meeting and that it was believed that these incidents might be exploited by "someone" wanting to disrupt friendly Argentine-Brazilian relations.

The Inquiry Committee is reported as proceeding with their "thorough investigation of the more than 170 kilometers of completely unprotected Brazilian border". Also reported is the friendly "churrasco" and subsequent secret meeting between Brazilian and Argentine officials in Santo Angelo. The speech of Paraiba Deputy Alcides Carneiro, Member of the Committee, made at the Santo Angelo farewell luncheon is reported in which the Deputy vehemently denounced the Brazilian government for its "complete abandonment" of the frontier districts. He also set forth the points of agreement reached by the Committee: effective policing of the border; more stringent control of smuggling, and more effective customs inspection.

The large influential daily newspaper, CORREIO DO POVO, in giving ample coverage to the border incidents, published Secretary Michaelson's report and recommendations in full; noted that Foreign Minister Neves da Fontoura in a message to the Chamber of Deputies termed the acts of Argentine police "criminal", and

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stated that Argentina had suggested that these incidents are "being exploited by certain groups". This paper also printed a telegram from Argentine President Perón to Uruguaiana Mayor Valls in which he stated that the Argentine people know who directs this campaign to disrupt Argentine-Brazilian relations, but that the effort is useless; he noted that the frontier "did not separate the two peoples, but rather united them". The Mayor is reported as concurring in this opinion.

The Catholic daily, JORNAL DO DIA, gave considerable space to the "slaughter of the 'formiguinhas'" (minor smugglers), noting, however, that no contraband merchandise had actually been seized by the gendarmes.

Pôrto Alegre's afternoon daily, FOLHA DA TARDE, whose special correspondent interviewed border people, both officials and residents, stated that these incidents were caused by "minor smugglers who risked their lives in ventures financed by those who risked only their money", and noted that the poor residents along the Uruguay River present a social problem. The paper cites the need for effective policing and quotes a Federal Deputy as stating: "Brazilian frontiers are in the same condition as when God made them."

Most editorial opinion agreed on the necessity for effective policing of the unprotected frontier, deplored the behavior of Perón's police and the Argentine President's obvious consent to these "invasions". One editorial was outspoken on this question, noting that "such crimes are the product of a totalitarian regime such as Perón's". Running throughout the sizeable volume of reporting was the hint that "certain political groups" were exploiting these incidents to disrupt the friendly relations between Brazil and Argentina.

*Myron Brockway Lawrence*  
Myron Brockway Lawrence  
American Vice Consul

File No. 511.2

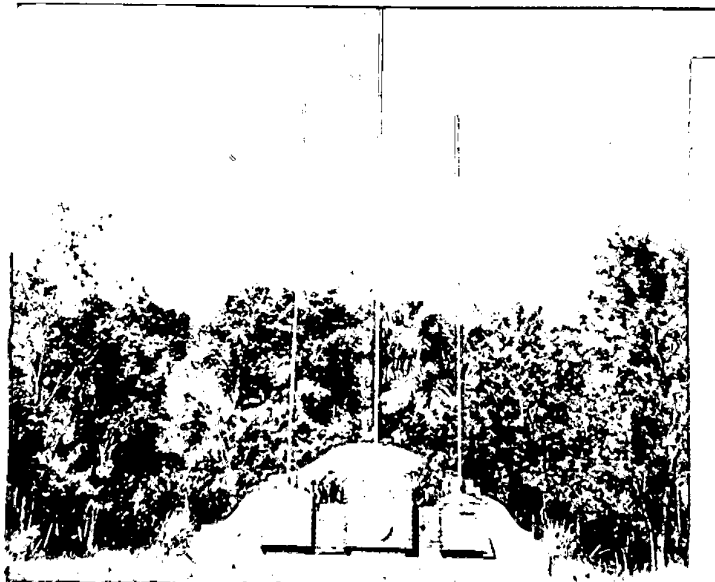
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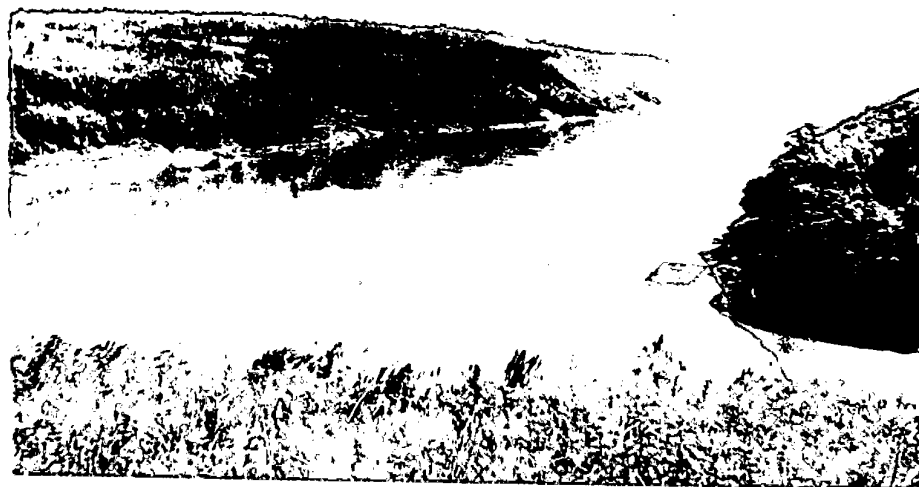
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ARGENTINA - BRAZIL

ARGENTINA MISIONES TERR. 25 33 S 54 38 W  
BORDER THREE MILES SOUTH OF FOZ DO IGUAZU, BRAZIL. ARGENTINA IN FOREGROUND,  
PARAGUAY TOP LEFT AND BRAZIL AT RIGHT. OFFICIAL USE ONLY - CIA 50512



M.I.D., M.A. Rept. No. 976, ~~Argentina~~ BOMID, Miami, Fla.,  
Sept. 5, 1944 - Re Argentina. (Confidential) **VITAL STORAGE**

Source: Luis Silva Correa, part owner & on staff of Diarios  
Associados, Brazilian newspaper & radio chain. Rated C-3.

Farrell-Peron govt. in Arg. has had maps printed showing  
bdry. of Argentina extending N. in Brazil to Porto Alegre, with  
following course of Jacai & Ibicici Rivers W. to Uruguay  
& designating terr. beyond present bdy. as "unredeemed." Under  
Rosas the Argentines had occupied this area but were driven  
out later.

Comment: Although not verified, this rumor, spread in Brazil, has disturbing effect - like German method of showing German rights beyond Versailles borders.